

**Board Meeting Minutes**  
**April 20, 2020**

The Board of Education of Independent School District No. 299, Caledonia, Minnesota, met in a regular school board meeting in the middle/high school auditorium with social distancing in mind for all visitors and via interactive technology due to the COVID-19 disease. The meeting was called to order by Chair Kelley McGraw at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was said. The school board members present were Jared Barnes, Matt Blocker, Melissa Marschall, Kelley McGraw, Daniel Small, Wendy Woyczik, Spencer Yohe, and student school board representatives Noah King and Sam Privet. Also present were Superintendent Craig Ihrke, Nathan Boler, Susan Link, Barb Meyer, Karen Schiltz, Gretchen Linzmeier, and Jordan Gerard.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Moved by Spencer Yohe, seconded by Daniel Small to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

**WARRIOR PRIDE**

The following resolution was moved by Melissa Marschall, seconded by Daniel Small

*Resolution Accepting Donations*

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes 123B.02, Subd. 6 provides: “The board may receive, for the benefit of the district, bequests, donations, or gifts for any proper purpose and apply the same to the purpose designated. In that behalf, the board may act as trustee of any trust created for the benefit of the district, or for the benefit of pupils thereof, including trusts created to provide pupils of the district with advanced education after completion of high school, in the advancement of education.”; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes 465.03 provides: “Any citizen, county, school district or town may accept a grant or devise of real or personal property and maintain such property for the benefit of its citizens in accordance with the terms prescribed by the donor. Nothing herein shall authorize such acceptance or use for religious or sectarian purposes. Every such acceptance shall be by resolution of the governing body adopted by a two-thirds majority of its members, expressing such terms in full.”; and

WHEREAS, every such acceptance shall be by resolution of the governing body adopted by a two-thirds majority of its members, expressing such terms in full;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the School Board of Independent School District No. 299, gratefully accepts the following donations as identified below:

Donor	Item
AcenTek	Offering free internet services to our families that did not have internet during the COVID-19 shutdown.

Motion carried by a unanimous vote. Whereupon, said Resolution was declared duly adopted.

**STUDENT SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER REPORT**

Student school board members Noah King and Sam Privet updated the board regarding the Distance Learning. They felt that students were feeling comfortable with the process and that teachers are doing a good job laying things out for the students. They are hoping to return to school this year to see each other. A discussion was held with regard to a graduation ceremony. The school district is reviewing possibilities to have some type of ceremony for the seniors in the event that school is not back in session.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Moved by Daniel Small, seconded by Wendy Woyczik to approve the following consent agenda items:

- Approval of the March 16, 2020 regular school board meeting minutes
- Approval of the electronic transfers and bills due and payable amounting to \$597,718.87 along with electronic transfers from MSDLAF to Merchants Bank in the amount of \$800,000.00.
- Accept the resignation of Gina Meinertz as the elementary principal/curriculum director at the end of the 2019-2020 school year with thanks for her six years of service to our school district.
- Ratify the hiring of Tristan Jenson, pending obtaining proper Minnesota licensure, as the full-time middle/high school special education teacher at BA/1 at \$42,628.00 beginning the 2020-2021 school year.
- Ratify the hiring of Austin Bauer, pending obtaining proper Minnesota licensure, as the full-time middle/high school mathematics teacher at BA/1 at \$42,628.00 beginning the 2020-2021 school year.
- Ratify the hiring of Robert “Robbie” Sobczak, pending obtaining proper Minnesota licensure, as the full-time middle/high school social studies teacher at BA/1 at \$42,628.00 beginning the 2020-2021 school year.
- Ratify the hiring of Ryan Bunting, pending obtaining proper Minnesota licensure, as the full-time middle/high school science teacher at BA/1 at \$42,628.00 beginning the 2020-2021 school year
- Accept the maternity leave request of Amanda Schulte to begin around her due date of May 30, 2020. Due to the COVID-19 school shutdown and if school is not back in session, she will be utilizing her sick leave during labor and recovery and then returning to work teaching online given there are no complications. She will be returning in the Fall of the 2020-2021 school year.

Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **Elementary Principal Position**

Moved by Matt Blocker, seconded by Daniel Small to accept the appointment of Mrs. Susan Link as the elementary principal beginning the 2020-2021 school year with thanks to her for serving as the interim elementary principal during the 2019-2020 school year. Those voting in favor: Matt Blocker, Melissa Marschall, Kelley McGraw, Daniel Small, Wendy Woyczik, and Spencer Yohe. Those opposed: Jared Barnes. Motion carried.

### **Curriculum Director Position**

Moved by Spencer Yohe, seconded by Daniel Small to add the Curriculum Director position to the title of the Elementary Principal position as it has been done the past with this position. Those voting in favor: Matt Blocker, Melissa Marschall, Kelley McGraw, Daniel Small, Wendy Woyczik, and Spencer Yohe. Those opposed: Jared Barnes. Motion carried.

### ACT Test for Students

Moved by Melissa Marschall, seconded by Daniel Small to have the school district pay for the ACT fee for one time only per student whether they take the test during the summer of 2020 or if they take the test in October of 2020. The school district will not pay this fee twice for a student if they elect to take the ACT test both times. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Mrs. Link thanked the parents, grandparents, and daycare providers for supporting our students by helping with “at home” learning, on top of other home and job responsibilities. She thanked our teacher and support staff for putting together and distributing the supplies to send home to our elementary students. She thanked the teachers for being flexible, learning new technology and delivery of instruction, and working long hours to reach our students and parents when they are available. She thanked the paraprofessionals who have taken on new roles during the COVID-19 crisis. She thanked Cindy Colleran who distributed many iPads and intercepted many phones calls. She thanked the office staff whose roles have changed, and Mr. Ihrke and Mr. Boler for working as an integrated, efficient, communicative team as we have made and continue to make decisions as the COVID-19 crises unfolds each day. She stated that 100% of all materials had been picked up and delivered on distribution day. Attendance has been high, and students are excited to see their classmates and teachers again via Zoom. All students have been offered technology. Students and families are working together on learning and getting outdoors and spending quality time together. We continue to work with all students and parents to help them get comfortable with technology. Teachers have made videos and have given step by step instructions on how to access sites and apps. They continue to work with getting internet to students in remote areas and have also provided paper copies to these families. We are working with teachers next year to use Schoology as the main communication and organizational platform to reach parents. We are taking a team approach to help our students understand the importance of their roles in Distance Learning. The next distribution day will be held on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, and in case of inclement weather, it will be held on April 24<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Boler informed the board that overall things are off to a good start with Distance Learning, and that changes have been made along the way. He thanked everyone for their hard work and dedication to making this possible. He is working on a survey to go out to parents to get feedback in order to continue to make changes with students’ best interest in mind. The 2020-2021 schedule has been finalized and is in the final review stage. He stated that he is very pleased with the new schedule and believes it has created new opportunities for students through some creative changes and shared with the board an updated copy of the schedule. He is working on creating an online registration for students to register for 2020-2021 classes. They will begin with the current juniors and work their way down. He would like to have this completed in April. He conducted interviews for the special education, math and social studies teacher positions and is very excited with the new hires for these positions. Science interviews were held on April 17<sup>th</sup>. He thanked the staff who were part of these hiring committees. The spring ACT date has been canceled. He is looking at having the current juniors take the ACT in October (as seniors). There will be no MCA tests given this year per MDE. Junior Day has been postponed until further notice. Planning for the remainder of the year is on hold at this time for such things as graduation, senior awards night, and end of the year activities.

Ms. Linzmeier informed the board that she is offering weekly Zoom meetings and activities. Teachers are recording themselves doing lessons and reading stories. Childcare is going well, ranging five to twelve children per day. All community ed programs are postponed and/or canceled until we are back in school. The spring in-school ACT test for this year’s juniors is canceled.

Superintendent Ihrke informed the board that the ingenuity of our school staff has been nothing short of amazing! They have served approximately 400 meals per day (800 actually because there are two meals in each bag). They are delivering a high-quality education remotely. They are worried about the kids who seem to be less engaged than others and doubling and tripling their efforts. Our paraprofessionals are working with students academically and emotionally. They are checking in with students to see how they are doing. The office staff has continued to plug away at their duties and provide excellent customer service. Our custodial staff has found plenty to do and has taken on projects that might not otherwise have been completed. Our counselors have worked tirelessly to reach out to students in need and have arranged for Zoom meetings to have casual conversations with parents about their experiences. Our principals have orchestrated these efforts and will continue to adapt and improvise as we go forward. As was anticipated, there have been problems. There were some issues with Schoology and Zoom initially. The Zoom issues have been mitigated. Schoology has been overwhelmed, but it has gotten better. The broadband infrastructure is an issue with some, but our staff is understanding of this and making concessions and accommodations as necessary. Our parents and students have also stepped up to the challenges created by distance learning. We still have a small percentage of students who are not engaging as much as we would have hoped. Approximately 95% of our students are engaged and doing well. Just as they would have done in a face to face situation, our staff has increased their efforts with the smaller percentage and doing their best to help them do their best. At present, we are scheduled to have students back in person on May 4th. As we get nearer that date, the likelihood of that happening seems further away. We will continue to make the best of the way things have turned out and adapt as necessary to what the future brings. The school district is exploring alternative options for graduation in the event graduation cannot be held as planned. No decisions have been made at this time. He informed the board that the parking lots are in poor shape, especially the one at the MSHS. One option we have is to do an abatement bond to pay for the lots. With the current oil prices, this makes this a great time to do this project, while the financial situation of the taxpayers in our district makes it a bad time to do this project. This topic will continue to be discussed. He stated that while the governor's current executive order would allow schools to reopen on May 4<sup>th</sup>, school leaders will plan for a variety of scenarios including students not returning until the 2020-2021 school year.

Mrs. Meyer continues to work on the COVID-19 and school funding requirements. She is updating special ed SEDRA, setting up additional tracking expenses due to COVID-19, participates in Zoom meetings with Region V, MASBO, crisis, HVED, MDE, administration meetings, etc. She is working on LCTS reporting and other miscellaneous office duties.

## **NEW BUSINESS ITEMS**

### **School Policies**

The school board reviewed the following policies:

- Veteran's Preference Policy #405
- Public and Private Personnel Date Policy #406
- Employee Right to Know – Exposure to Hazardous Substances Policy #407
- Subpoena of a School District Employee Policy #408
- Employee Publications, Instructional Materials, Inventions, and Creations Policy #409
- Family and Medical Leave Policy #410
- Expense Reimbursement Policy #412

- Harassment and Violence Policy #413
- Mandated Reporting of Child Neglect or Physical or Sexual Abuse Policy #414
- Mandated Reporting of Maltreatment of Vulnerable Adults Policy #415

### **BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**

Director Yohe informed the board that an HVED meeting will be held on Wednesday evening via Zoom. Director Marschall updated the board regarding the curriculum committee meeting. Director McGraw thanked everyone for making the possible solution our school district can continue to do during these difficult times and thanked all the staff, students and parents for everything they continue to do. Superintendent Ihrke informed the board that a facilities committee meeting will be scheduled in the near future.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Daniel Small, seconded by Melissa Marschall to adjourn the meeting at 6:58 p.m. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

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Spencer Yohe, Clerk